

Seed of garden in kid's soul

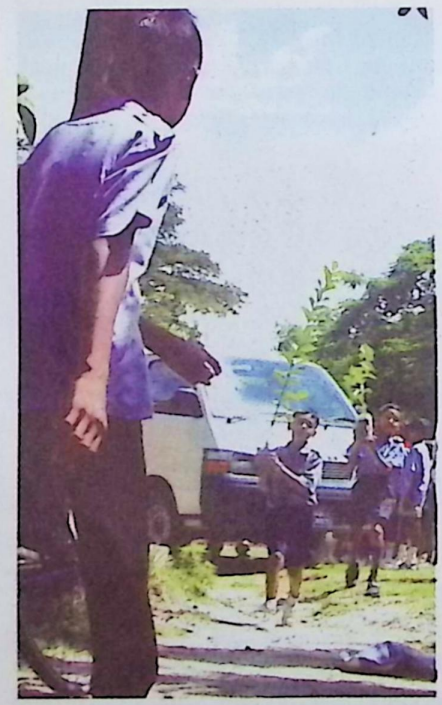
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ONE of the key thinkers on environment, Dwijen Sarma, says that we must sow the seeds of environment awareness in the hearts of our kids. He thinks that kids must learn to appreciate environment from a non-anthropocentric point of view. The beautiful earth is not only for people but also for other living creatures and non-living matters.

Keeping this in mind Arch.KIDS (an outreach program of Department of Archiecture, BRAC University) and BRAC University Environment Awareness Forum (BUEAF) with the support of ShaDa (*Shamajik Daibodhota*) went to Amdala Govt. Primary School located by the river Ichamoti in Manikganj to initiate a school garden which will be designed and maintained by the school kids themselves. This was the fourth workshop of Arch.KIDS.

Slide shows creating awareness on plants and insects among kids

A school garden needs at least four things appropriate space, support of administration, source of money and a dedicated teacher. The garden will not sustain without any of these. It is not difficult to get kids' participation in the garden. Kids can do their best when they get a sense of ownership. The main objective of a school garden is education. A creative teacher can teach almost all subjects in a garden. Kids like to have edible fruit trees preferably small fruits so that many kids can eat. Kids can learn about colours of different season from flowering plants. A school garden may have plants which invite birds, butterflies and other creatures. Bangladesh is rich for its natural landscape and plant diversity. A school garden can prioritise locally native plant species to host a wide range of biodiversity. Kids love to nurture plants which will provide them a quick return of their effort such as seasonal vegetables and flowers. It may provide them all the year round interest.



Twenty kids from class two to five participated in this one-day workshop. The facilitator team was comprised of teachers from the Department of Architecture and Students of BRAC University. A presentation and discussion session was facilitated by K H Kabir and Huraera Jabeen on purpose of a school garden, plants' benefits, types, habitat, associated biodiversity, plant care and garden design. It was a rewarding experience for the facilitators that the kids not only know plants by names but also know their respective benefits. In the next session the kids were divided into four groups facilitated by two University-students and one schoolteacher. The task of groups was to design a dream school-garden. Each group presented their dreams and provided reasons behind their ideas. In the end the groups carried out a plantation session. Within half an hour they planted sixty plants. Each plant had tags containing plant's name and the name of the kid's who planted. Kids own those plants and it is mainly their responsibility to take care of those.

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